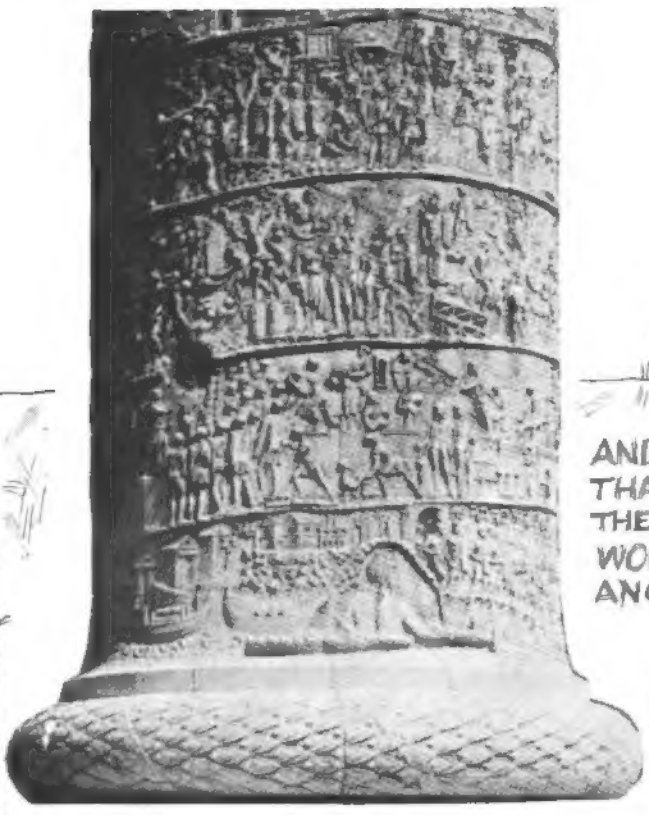
CAPTAIN MARVEL

WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL



AND IT WAS WRITTEN
THAT IN THE YEAR 1940 A.D.,
THE EGYPTIAN WIZARD, SHAZAM
WOULD PASS HIS POWERS ONTO
ANOTHER... A BOY...

The Rocket's Blast Special presents...

Captain Marvel

Staff

Gene Arnold

Don Newton

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C.C. Beck

\SHAZAM!/

IT WAS FEBRUARY OF 1940 WHEN CAPTAIN MARVEL, THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL, ARRIVED ON THE SCENE. THE COVER OF WHIZ COMICS #1, WHICH WAS LABELED WHIZ #2, DISPLAYED A MIGHTY SPECIMEN OF A MAN HURLING A BLUE AUTOMOBILE INTO THE SIDE OF A RED BRICK BUILDING. TWO THUGS ARE SEEN FALLING FROM THE CAR WITH A TOMMY GUN ALSO FALLING TO THE GROUND. NARY A WORD IS SPOKEN ON THE HISTORIC COVER BUT A CAPTION STATES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE : "GANGWAY FOR CAPTAIN MARVEL!"

INSIDE WE ARE TOLD THE ORIGIN OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. A YOUNG BOY WHO APPEARS TO BE ABOUT 14 YEARS OF AGE IS SELLING NEWSPAPERS IN FRONT OF A SUBWAY ON A RAINY NIGHT. A MAN APPROACHED HIM DRESSED IN A DARK GREEN OVERCOAT AND OVER-FLOWING HAT, REMINISCENT OF WHAT THE SHADOW USED TO WEAR. AFTER ASKING THE BOY WHY HE WASN'T AT HOME IN BED, THE MAN ADVISED THE YOUTH TO FOLLOW HIM. BILLY BATSON OBEDIENTLY FOLLOWED THE MAN DEEP INTO THE SUBWAY. SUDDENLY, A MODERNISTIC SUBWAY CAR APPEARED AND BOTH THE MAN AND BILLY BOARDED IT. THE LONE OCCUPANTS WERE DRIVEN THOUGH THE PITCH-BLACK TUNNEL AT TREMENDOUS SPEED.UNTIL THEY CAME TO A PLATFORM RESEMBLING THE MOUTH OF A WEIRD, SUBTERRANEAN CAVERN. FLARING TORCHES BEGAN TO REVEAL AN ANCIENT UNDERGROUND HALL. SEATED ON A MARBLE THRONE AT THE END OF THE CAVERN WAS AN OLD, OLD MAN WITH A HUGE GRANITE STONE HANGING OVER HIS HEAD SUPPORTED ONLY BY A SLENDER THREAD. THE OLD MAN GREETED BILLY BATSON BY NAME, EXPLAING TO HIM THAT HE KNOWS EVERYTHING AND THEN PROCEEDED TO CALL OUT HIS OWN NAME, SHAZAM. AT THE UTTERING OF HIS NAME, A BOLT OF LIGHTNING BOOMED OUT. THEN, AS IF BY MAGIC, THE NAME OF SHAZAM WAS SPELLED OUT ON THE WALL. THE EGYPTIAN WIZARD FROM THE YEAR 3,000 B.C. SHOWED BILLY WHAT EACH LETTER OF HIS NAME STOOD FOR. THE "S" REPRESENTED SOLOMON FOR WISDOM. THE "H" CAME FROM FROM HERCULES AND GAVE, THEREFORE, STRENGTH. THE "A" MEANT ATLAS FOR STAMINA. "Z" REPRESENTED ZEUS OR POWER. THE OTHER "A" STOOD FOR ACHILLES AND PORTRAYED COURAGE AND THE "M" IN SHAZAM WAS FOR MERCURY AND GAVE SPEED.

OLD SHAZAM PATIENTLY EXPLAINED TO BILLY THAT FOR 3,000 YEARS HE HAD USED THESE POWERS TO BATTLE THE FORCES OF EVIL. THEN A FLASHBACK SHOWED THAT BILLY'S WICKED UNCLE HAD TAKEN ALL THE MONEY AND BONDS THAT HAD BEEN MEANT FOR BILLY'S CARE (HOW THEY DIED IS NOT EXPLAINED) AFTER THE YOUTH'S PARENTS HAD DIED. THE UNCLE THEN DROVE BILLY FROM HIS HOUSE IN ORDER TO HAVE ALL THE ORPHAN'S MONEY FOR HIMSELF. THE CLIMAX WAS FAST APPROACHING AS OLD SHAZAM TOLD BILLY THAT ALL OF HIS LIFE HE HAD FOUGHT INJUSTICE AND CRUELTY BUT THAT NOW HIS TIME WAS UP. SHAZAM WAS TRYING TO TELL BILLY THAT HE WOULD BE TAKING SHAZAM'S PLACE. FOR WHEN HE SPOKE SHAZAM'S NAME, HE WOULD BECOME "THE STRONGEST AND MIGHTIEST MAN IN THE WORLD". THE OLD MAN TOLD BILLY TO SPEAK HIS NAME; BILLY OBLIGED AND AGAIN A BOLT OF LIGHTNING EMERGED , CHANGING THE FRAIL YOUNGSTER INTO A DYNAMIC, WELL-PROPORTIONED INDIVIDUAL WHO LOOKED LIKE HE COULD TAKE A DOZEN CHALLENGERS WITHOUT WORKING UPT A SWEAT. HE WAS DRESSED IN A RED COSTUME, WITH A YELLOW THUNDERBOLT ON HIS CHEST, A LARGE YELLOW BELT, YELLOW STRIPES ON HIS SLEEVES AND YELLOW BOOTS. HIS CAPE, PRIMARILY WHITE WITH YELLOW TRIM, IS ATTACHED BY A YELLOW CORD. THE ONLY BASIC CHANGE IN HIS UNIFORM FROM LATER APPEARANCES WAS THAT HIS COSTUME WAS FASTENED BY A SINGLE YELLOW BUTTON BY HIS UPPER RIGHT CHEST. THIS PORTION OF THE COSTUME, FOR SOME INEXPLICABLE REASON, WOULD SOON DISAPPEAR.

AS THE MAN WHO WOULD GAIN THE REPUTATION OF "THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL" STOOD THERE, SHAZAM TOLD HIM HE COULD BECOME BILLY BATSON AGAIN BY SPEAKING HIS NAME. SHAZAM SAID HE HAD TO GO, SO HE TOLD CAPT. MARVEL TO SPEAK HIS NAME. CAPTAIN MARVEL SAID "SHAZAM", BUT THIS TIME THE LIGHTNING BOLT CUT THE THIN THREAD HOLDING THE GRANITE BLOCK. IT FELL ON SHAZAM, WHOSE TIME WAS UP.(BILLY COULD SEE SHAZAM WHENEVER HE WANTED BY SIMPLY GOING TO THE FORGOTTEN SECTION OF THE SUBWAY AND LIGHTING A TORCH BY THE WIZARD'S THRONE. SHAZAM'S SPIRIT WOULD THEN APPEAR TO OFFER COUNSEL AND ADVICE.) SUDDENLY, BILLY FOUND HIMSELF BACK IN FRONT OF THE SUBWAY SELLING HIS PAPERS.

THE NEXT MORNING, BILLY WAS AGAIN SELLING HIS PAPERS WHICH TOLD OF A MANIAC SCIENTIST WHO THREATENED THE U.S. RADIO SYSTEM AND DEMANDED FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS. AS IT TURNED OUT, THE SCIENTIST WAS NONE OTHER THAN SIVANA, WHO WOULD BE THE FEATURED ARCH-VILLAIN THROUGHOUT CAPTAIN MARVEL'S LIFE. I'LL HAVE MORE TO SAY ABOUT SIVANA LATER.

BILLY OVERHEARD SIVANA'S HENCHMEN AND RUSHED TO TELL THE OWNER OF RADIO STATION WHIZ ABOUT HIS FINDINGS. THE OWNER, STERLING MORRIS, WANTED TO BRUSH

A RETELLING OF THE ORIGIN OF...

CAPTAIN MARVEL

ONE RAINY NIGHT IN A GREAT EASTERN CITY, A RAGGED ORPHAN TRUDGES THROUGH THE LONELY STREETS. THE HOUR IS LATE AS HE HURRIES TO THE HOME OF HIS CRUEL UNCLE, AFTER A LONG DAY AND EVENING SELLING NEWSPAPERS.

ENTERING AN OLD, ABANDONED SUBWAY, THEY DESCEND DEEP INTO LONG MINUTES OF BONE-CHILLING BLACKNESS. THEN AT LAST THEY EMERGE INTO A GREAT HALL, RIMMED BY GIGANTIC ICONS AND BLAZING TORCHES.....

FAR, FAR TO THE END STANDS AN ANCIENT THRONE AND SETTED THERE, AN AGED YET AWESOME FIGURE, GARBED IN THE ROBES OF AN ERA LONG SINCE PAST. ABOVE HIS HEAD HANGS A HUGE STONE... SUSPENDED BY A SINGLE THREAD!
BILLY BATSON! APPROACH THE PRESENCE OF..."SHAZAM!"

YOU KNOW ME SIR ???
ALL THINGS ARE KNOWN TO ME! HENCE I HAVE SUMMONED YOU; FOR I HAVE LOOKED DEEP INTO YOUR HEART AND FOUND THERE, THE VIRTUES I DESIRE. YOU SHALL SUCCEED ME! DOWN THROUGH THE AGES I HAVE FOUGHT EVIL, BUT IT IS WRITTEN THAT MY TIME ON EARTH SHALL END AND ANOTHER SHALL CHAMPION THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE . . .
SOLOMON
HERCU
ATLAS
EUS
CHILL
ERCU
IN YOU, I SHALL INVEST THE POWERS OF 6 ELDER GODS . . . THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON, THE STRENGTH OF HERCULES, THE STAMINA OF ATLAS, THE POWER OF ZEUS THE COURAGE OF ACHILLES AND THE SPEED OF MERCURY!
NOW YOU HAVE BUT TO PRONOUNCE MY NAME!
SHAZAM!
AND WHERE THE BOY STOOD THERE APPEARS A RED AND GOLD CLAD GIANT!
I NAME YOU, "CAPTAIN MARVEL" AND CHARGE YOU TO CALL UPON YOUR POWERS ONLY IN THE DEFENSE OF THE RIGHT!
SNAP
THUS . . . IT IS TIME THAT I DEPART!
THE THREAD SNAPS AND THE STONE CRUSHES THE OLD WIZARD.
MINUTES LATER BILLY BATSON LEAVES THE SUBWAY.
THE RAIN'S STOPPED!
IT ALL SEEMS LIKE A DREAM, I WONDER: DID IT REALLY HAPPEN?
NEWTON

BILLY ASIDE AS AN IMATURE KID, BUT BILLY WAS NO FOOL. HE MADE A DEAL WITH MR. MORRIS: IF HE COULD LOCATE THE PHANTOM'S LABORATORY, THEN MR. MORRIS WOULD GIVE HIM A JOB AT HIS STATION AS A RADIO ANNOUNCER. ALL I CAN SAY IS, THAT AS A RADIO ANNOUNCER MYSELF, THAT'S A HECK OF A WAY TO GET A JOB IN BROADCASTING.

TO MAKE A LONG ORIGIN STORY SHORT, CAPTAIN MARVEL BROKE UP SIVANA'S LABORATORY AND HIS RADIO SILENCER MACHINE. THEN BILLY WENT TO MR. MORRIS AND ASKED HIM IF HE HAD THE JOB AT RADIO STATION WHIZ. MR. MORRIS, TRUE TO HIS WORD, SAID YES AND TOLD BILLY THAT FROM THEN ON HE WOULD BE KNOWN AS "BILLY BATSON, RADIO REPORTER".

CAPTAIN MARVEL'S RELATIVES

CAPTAIN MARVEL HAD ONLY ONE CLOSE RELATIVE. ACTUALLY, I SHOULD SAY BILLY BATSON HAD ONLY ONE RELATIVE. THAT WAS HIS SISTER, MARY. BILLY HAD NO IDEA THAT HE EVEN HAD A SISTER, AS TOLD IN HER ORIGIN IN CAPTAIN MARVEL #18. ONE DAY, RADIO STATION WHIZ WAS KICKING OFF A NEW QUIZ PANEL PROGRAM FEATURING YOUNGSTERS WITH HIGH I.Q.'s. ONE OF THE CONTESTANTS WAS A LOVELY, AUBURN-HAIRED MISS WHO COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS A TYPICAL ALL-AMERICAN GIRL. SHE WAS MARY BROMFIELD, ABOUT THE SAME AGE AS BILLY. ONE OF THE FIRST QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL WAS FROM A C. BECK, WHO WANTED TO KNOW WHO CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS. ONE OF THE PANELISTS, FREDDY FREEMAN (I'LL HAVE MORE TO SAY ABOUT FREDDY IN A MOMENT), GOT OUT OF THE TRICKY QUESTION BY ANSWERING THAT "HE'S THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL".

ANYWAY, THE QUIZ SHOW PAUSED FOR FIVE MINUTES BECAUSE BILLY BATSON, THE HOST OF THE SHOW, HAD RECEIVED AN URGENT NOTE FROM A DYING WOMAN, WHO WANTED TO SEE HIM. CHANGING TO CAPTAIN MARVEL, BILLY WAS AT THE WOMAN'S APARTMENT IN A FLASH. SHE TOLD HIM FROM HER DEATH BED THAT SHE HAD BEEN A NURSE FOR HIS PARENTS BEFORE THEY DIED. SHE WENT ON TO SAY THAT BILLY HAD A TWIN SISTER WHOM SHE HAD CARED FOR OVER THE YEARS AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN SEPARATED WHEN THEY WERE INFANTS. THEN SHE HAD TAKEN BILLY'S SISTER TO A RICH LADY SHE HAD BEEN WORKING FOR, WHOSE OWN BABY DAUGHTER HAD SUDDENLY DIED. BILLY HAD BEEN TAKEN TO AN ORPHANAGE WHILE HIS SISTER HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP BY THE RICH WOMAN AND THE NURSE WHO WAS THEN DYING. SHE DIED IN HER BED BEFORE SHE COULD TELL BILLY HIS SISTER'S LAST NAME, BUT SHE DID MANAGE TO TELL HIM THAT HE WOULD KNOW HER BY A BROKEN LOCKET SHE HAD WORN OVER THE YEARS. THE NURSE THEN GAVE HIM ONE HALF OF THE LOCKET.

BILLY RETURNED TO THE STUDIO TO CONTINUE THE QUIZ SHOW. AFTER THE CHOW, HE REMEMBERED THAT MARY BROMFIELD HAD BEEN WEARING A BROKEN LOCKET. CAPTAIN MARVEL AND CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR(ACTUALLY FREDDY FREEMAN) FOLLOWED MARY AND DISCOVERED HER BEING KIDNAPPED. AFTER RESCUING HER, CAPTAIN MARVEL RETURNED TO BILLY BATSON AND THEY FOUND THAT THE BROKEN LOCKETS FITTED AND THAT MARY BROMFIELD WAS NONE OTHER THAN MARY BATSON, BILLY'S TWIN SISTER. THE KIDNAPPERS HAD GAINED A SECOND WIND THEN AND WADED INTO BILLY AND FREDDY FREEMAN (CAPTAIN MARVEL, JR.). MARY WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF SHE SAID THE MAGIC WORD, SHAZAM. WELL, THAT FAMOUS BOLT OF LIGHTNING APPEARED AND MARY TURNED INTO MARY MARVEL. THE MINI-SKIRTED GIRL WONDER RETURNED THE FAVOR AND RESCUED BILLY AND FREDDY. THEY ALL WENT TO THE ABANDONED SUBWAY HOME OF OLD SHAZAM WHO EXPLAINED THAT HE KNEW ALL ALONG THAT BILLY WOULD BE RE-UNITED WITH MARY. THE ONLY DIFERENCE IN THE WORD SHAZAM AS FAR AS MARY WAS CONCERNED, WAS THAT "S" STOOD FOR SELENA AND GRACE, "H" FOR HIPPOLYTA AND STRENGTH, "A" FOR ARIADNE AND SKILL, "Z" FOR ZEPHYRUS, "A" FOR AURORA AND BEAUTY, AND "M" FOR MINERVA AND WISDOM.

MARY STUCK AROUND TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE CAPTAIN MARVEL IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #19 BEFORE SHE WAS TO EXIT TO HER OWN MAGAZINE, WOW COMICS AND STILL LATER, MARY MARVEL COMICS.

ALTHOUGH SOME CONSIDERED CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR TO BE CAPTAIN MARVEL'S YOUNGER BROTHER, HE WAS NOT. IN FACT, THERE WAS NO RELATION AT ALL, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS TERMED A MEMBER OF THE MARVEL FAMILY. (CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR CAME INTO BEING IN WHIZ #25) A BLOND-HAIRED, CREW-CUT SUPER HUMAN BY THE NAME OF CAPTAIN NAZI HAD BEEN GIVING THIS COUNTRY AND CAPTAIN MARVEL A HARD TIME AFTER WORLD WAR TWO HAD JUST BEGUN FOR THE UNITED STATES.

ONE DAY CAPTAIN NAZI AND CAPTAIN MARVEL WERE ENGAGED IN A KNOCK-DOWN, DRAG-OUT FIGHT ON THE WINGS OF AN AIRPLANE. THE GOOD CAPTAIN UNCORKED A MIGHTY RIGHT THAT HAD SENT CAPTAIN NAZI PLUMMETING INTO THE WATERS OF A BAY BELOW WHERE A YOUNG BOY NAMED FREDDY FREEMAN AND HIS GRANDFATHER WERE FISHING IN A NEARBY ROWBOAT. THEY SPOTTED CAPTAIN NAZI STRUGGLING IN THE WATER (NOT KNOWING WHO HE WAS) AND PULLED HIM TO RESCUE IN THEIR BOAT. CAPTAIN NAZI REPAID THEIR KINDNESS BY KNOCKING FREDDY'S GRANDFATHER INTO THE WATER, WHERE HE DROWNED. HE THEN KNOCKED THE DAYLIGHT OUT OF FREDDY WITH AN OAR AND LEFT HIM TO DROWN, WHICH HE DID NOT. CAPTAIN MARVEL ARRIVED AND PULLED FREDDY FROM THE WATER. THE DOCTORS TOLD BILLY AT THE HOSPITAL THAT FREDDY HAD A BROKEN BACK AND WOULD NOT LIVE OUT THE NIGHT. AND EVEN IF HE DID, HE'D BE A CRIPPLE THE REST OF HIS LIFE. BILLY

THREW FREDDY OVER HIS SHOULDER AND TOOK HIM TO SEE SHAZAM. (I GUESS BILLY DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE BEST WAY TO KILL SOMEBODY QUICK IS TO THROW A PERSON WITH A BROKEN BACK OVER YOUR SHOULDER).

BILLY TOLD OLD SHAZAM OF FREDDY'S PLIGHT. SHAZAM TOOK PITY ON THE INJURED LAD AND INVESTED INTO HIM THE POWERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. HOWEVER, INSTEAD OF SAYING "SHAZAM", FREDDY WAS TO UTTER THE WORDS OF HIS BENEFACTOR, CAPTAIN MARVEL. SO FREDDY SAID "CAPTAIN MARVEL" AND HE WAS TRANSFORMED INTO CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR, A SMALLER-IN-STATURE VERSION OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. IN FACT, CAP. JR. WAS A CARBON-COPY OF FREDDY FREEMAN WITH THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING HIS SPECIAL POWERS AND THE BLUE-COSTUMED SUIT HE WORE.

CAPTAIN MARVEL THEN TOLD CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR: "I'M GOING TO SEND YOU INTO MASTER COMICS TO TAKE CARE OF CAPT. NAZI" AND WITH THAT, CAP. JR. LEFT WHIZ TO SOLO IN MASTER AND CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR COMICS. HE MADE ONLY ONE APPEARANCE IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES AND THAT WAS IN ISSUE NUMBER 18 WHEN THE MARVEL FAMILY CAME INTO BEING.

SIVANA

I TOUCHED JUST BRIEFLY ON THE MAD SCIENTIST, SIVANA. THE SMALL-IN-STATURE, BUT LONG-ON-EVIL-IDEAS SIVANA WAS TO BE THE PRINCIPAL ADVERSARY OF CAPTAIN MARVEL THROUGHOUT HIS LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER AS A CRIME FIGHTER. IT WAS ONLY APPROPRIATE THAT SIVANA APPEARED IN WHIZ #1 IN THE CAPTAIN'S FIRST APPEARANCE AND IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #150, HIS LAST APPEARANCE. ALL TOTALED, THE CUNNING SIVANA APPEARED IN 44 OF THE 150 CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES , IN ADDITION TO NUMEROUS OTHER APPEARANCES IN OTHER CAPTAIN MARVEL COMIC BOOKS. (HE ALSO FOUGHT CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR IN HIS EARLY COMIC BOOKS UNTIL HIS SON SIVANA JUNIOR CAME ALONG TO TAKE UP THAT CHORE)(SIVANA'S SON MADE HIS DEBUT IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #52) SIVANA APPEARED IN SPECIAL EDITION NUMBER ONE, TOO. THIS WAS A ONE-SHOT COMIC BOOK FEATURING CAPTAIN MARVEL IN 1940.AND IT WAS THE FORERUNNER OF CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES.

SO INVOLVED WAS SIVANA IN HIS BATTLES WITH THE MAN HE CALLED "THE BIG RED CHEESE" THAT MANY TIMES HE WAS FEATURED IN MORE THAN ONE OF THE STORIES. FOR EXAMPLE, HE APPEARED IN TWO STORIES IN ISSUES 3, 22, 48, AND 70. HE WAS FOUND IN 3 STORIES IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES 58 AND 142. AND IN ISSUES 85, 110, AND 150 HE WAS IN FOUR OF THE STORIES. SIVANA APPEARED IN SINGLE STORIES IN ISSUES 2, 4, 11, 17, 20, 24, 25, 28, 41, 46, 50, 52, 54, 56, 65, 68, 71, 72, 76, 78, 88, 89, 94, 95, 107, 116, 118, 121, 125, 127, 130, 134, 136, 138, AND 141. THE BALD-HEADED, BESPECTACLED SIVANA KNEW THE SECRET OF CAPTAIN MARVEL AND BILLY BATSON. HE EXPLOITED THIS WHENEVER HE COULD. MOST OF THE CATAIN'S OPPONENTS WERE UNAWARE THAT WHEN HE SAID SHAZAM THEY WERE IN BIG TROUBLE. BUT SIVANA, KNOWING THIS PERTINENT INFORMATION, WOULD TRY TO GET TO BILLY BEFORE HE COULD UTTER THE LIFE-SAVING WORD.

I POINTED OUT THAT SIVANA WAS AIDED, ON OCCASION, BY SIVANA JUNIOR. IT WAS EXPLAINED IN C.M.A. #52 THAT SIVANA JUNIOR HAD LIVED HIS LIFE ON VENUS, AND THAT'S WHY THE CAPTAIN HAD NEVER RUN INTO HIM BEFORE. SIVANA JUNIOR WAS A DOUBLE OF HIS FATHER, EXCEPT THAT HE WAS ABOUT 21 YEARS OF AGE.AND HAD A GLOWING HEAD OF HAIR.

NOW, SIVANA JUNIOR HAD TWO SISTERS. BEAUTIA WAS INTRODUCED IN FIRST ISSUES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. SHE WAS A BEAUTIFUL BLONDE AND SHE LOOKED NOTHING AT ALL LIKE SIVANA. NOT ONLY THAT, BUT INSTEAD OF HATING"THE BIG RED CHEESE", LIKE HER FATHER DID, SHE HAD A CRUSH ON HIM. NATURALLY, THIS TURN OF EVENTS DID NOT SET TOO WELL WITH HER FATHER. IN MARY MARVEL #1, GEORGIA SIVANA, SIVANA'S OTHER DAUGHTER, WAS INTRODUCED. LIKE HER BROTHER, SHE HAD BEEN LIVING ON THE PLANET VENUS. GEORGIA WAS MORE LIKE HER DAD. SHE HAD HOMELY FEATURES THAT RESEMBLED HER FATHER'S AND HER AIM IN LIFE WAS TO CREATE HAVOC FOR THE MARVEL FAMILY.

WE SHOULD POINT OUT HERE THAT SIVANA JUNIOR AND GEORGIA WERE NOT PRIMARY FOES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL. JUNIOR WAS CREATED TO DO BATTLE AGAINST CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR IN THE LATTER'S COMIC BOOKS. GEORGIA WAS NEEDED TO PITCH WAR AGAINST MARY MARVEL.

MR. MIND AND "The Monster Society of Evil"

CAPTAIN MARVEL ATTAINED HIS HE IGHT OF POPULARITY FROM ISSUES 22 THROUGH 46 OF CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES, FOR IN THESE ISSUES THE 25 CHAPTER SERIAL OF MR. MIND TOOK PLACE. I KNOW AS I LOOK BACK UPON THE DAYS WHEN I AVIDLY READ CAPTAIN MARVEL, THAT IT WAS MR. MIND WHO STOOD OUT AS THE MOST EXCITING CHARACTER CAPTAIN MARVEL EVER MET. AND HE MET QUITE A FEW CHARACTERS DURING HIS REIGN.

THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY OF EVIL WAS TO RULE THE UNIVERSE. THE MYSTERIOUS MR. MIND HEADED THE ORGANIZATION AND, AS HE TOLD CAPTAIN MARVEL IN CHAPTER ONE, HE DIDN'T MIND USING ANYONE HE COULD GET TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOALS. SAID HE: "ALL FAMOUS CRIMINALS ARE AT MY BECK AND CALL! ALSO THE NAZIS AND JAPS! ALSO CREATURES OF OTHER WORLDS!"

TRUE TO HIS WORD, MR. MIND FOUGHT CAPTAIN MARVEL TOOTH AND NAIL THROUGH 25 CHAPTERS USING EVERY METHOD IN THE WORLD TO DEFEAT HIM AND CAPTURE THE UNIVERSE. HE CALLED IN SUCH VILLAINS AS SIVANA, CAPTAIN NAZI, IBAC, AND NIPPO TO TAKE ON THE CAPTAIN.

TO THE UNINITIATED, YOU MUST BE WONDERING "WHO WAS MR. MIND?". GOOD QUESTION! THE ANSWER HAD BEEN FORTHCOMING UNTIL CHAPTER SIX IN ISSUE NUMBER 27 WHEN WE ACTUALLY DISCOVERED JUST WHO MR. MIND WAS. WOULD YOU BELIEVE A WORM? UP UNTIL THIS TIME, THE AMPLIFIED VOICE OF MR. MIND HAD BEEN HEARD, BUT NOT UNTIL CHAPTER 6 DID CAPTAIN MARVEL FIND MR. MIND INSIDE OF AN APPLE. MR. MIND ESCAPED AS HE DID AGAIN AND AGAIN UNTIL TIME RAN OUT ON HIM IN CHAPTER 25 IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #46.

THE SERIAL WAS JUST AN EXCITING AS ANY YOU WOULD SEE AT THE SATURDAY MORNING FUN CLUB. EACH CHAPTER WOULD END ON A SUSPENSEFUL NOTE THAT WOULD NOT BE COMPLETED UNTIL THE NEXT CHAPTER. AND THERE WERE SOME MIGHTY SUSPENSEFUL ENDINGS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN CHAPTER FOUR IN ISSUE 25, BILLY BATSON HAD BEEN FROZEN INSIDE OF A HUGE ICICLE. HE WAS LEFT TO DIE. IN THE OPENING CHAPTER OF THE NEXT ISSUE, A POLAR BEAR ATTACKED THE IMAGE OF BILLY HE SAW INSIDE THE ICICLE. ALL THE BEAR SUCCEEDED IN DOING WAS TO KNOCK THE ICE PRISON DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE. UPON LANDING THE IMPACT BROKE THE ICE IN TWO AND SET BILLY FREE TO TURN INTO CAPTAIN MARVEL.

THEN THERE WAS CHAPTER 11, WHEN MR. MIND'S HENCHMEN FIRED "BIG BERTHA" FROM THE PLANETOID PUNKUS IN THE DIRECTION OF RUSSIA AND AMERICA. (RUSSIA AND THE U.S. WERE ALLIES BACK IN THOSE DAYS) IN CHAPTER 12, CAPTAIN MARVEL FLEW TO THE END OF THE TEN-MILE-LONG BARREL OF THE HUGE CANNON BEFORE THE MILE-LONG SHELL LEFT THE MUZZLE. HE RIPPED IT IN TWO, AVERTING DISASTER TO AMERICA, BUT THE FIRST SHELL WAS HEADED FOR RUSSIA. THE CAPTAIN REACHED IT MOMENTS BEFORE IT SLAMMED INTO THE COMMUNIST COUNTRY. HOWEVER, MR. MIND TICKLED THE CAPTAIN SO HE'D LET THE SHELL DROP. WE HAD TO WAIT UNTIL ISSUE 34 OR CHAPTER 13 TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED. IN THAT NEXT ISSUE MR. MIND SUCCEEDED IN TICKLING CAPTAIN MARVEL TO THE POINT WHERE THE GIANT SHELL LANDED ON RUSSIA. BUT AS FATE HAD IT, THE SHELL TURNED OUT TO BE A DUD AND THERE WAS NO EXPLOSION.

AND SO IT WENT, CHAPTER AFTER CHAPTER, UNTIL IN CHAPTER 25 MR. MIND'S LUCK RAN OUT. HE WAS FLUSHED OUT OF A RADIATOR BY AN EXTERMINATOR WHO FILLED THE AREA WITH LIQUID FROM A SPRAY CAN. THE LITTLE WORM WHO WORE GLASSES WAS BROUGHT TO TRIAL FOR HIS MANY CRIMES INCLUDING MURDER, ATTEMPTED MURDER, INSURRECTION, AIDING AND ABETTING THE ENEMY AND HEAVEN KNOWS WHAT ELSE.

PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD JAMMED INTO THE COURTROOM FOR THE TRIAL. CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY. HE ACCUSED MR. MIND OF MURDERING 186,744 PERSONS IN COLD BLOOD(CAPTAIN MARVEL, YOU MUST ADMIT, HAD A WELL-DOCUMENTED CASE). AFTER HEARING THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL TELL OF THE WORM'S ATOCITIES, MR. MIND'S OWN DEFENSE LAWYER TURNED AGAINST HIM AND TOLD HIM HE HOPED HE GOT THE ELECTRIC CHAIR. THE DEFENSE LAWYER GOT HIS WISH WHEN THE JURY UNANIMOUSLY FOUND THE WICKED WORM GUILTY WITHOUT EVEN ADJOURNING TO THE JURYROOM. MR. MIND WAS TIED TO AN ELECTRIC CHAIR AND GIVEN THE SHOCKING TREATMENT THAT SENT HIM TO HIS DEATH. HIS FORM WAS LATER STUFFED AND PLACED INTO A MUSEUM.

CAPTAIN MARVEL'S OTHER ADVERSARIES

ALTHOUGH SIVANA AND MR. MIND ARE BEST KNOWN AS THE ENEMIES OF "THE BIG RED CHEESE", HE HAD SCORES OF OTHERS TO DO BATTLE WITH.

THE FIRST ONE I WANT TO MENTION HAD SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE HE WAS THE ONLY OTHER NEMESIS TO DUEL C.M. IN SERIAL FORM. I'M REFERRING TO OGGAR. NOW, OGGAR SPELLED BACKWARDS IS RAGGO. HOWEVER, THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF "THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST IMMORTAL".

OGGAR WAS INTRODUCED IN C.M.A. #61 IN THE BEGINNING OF A SIX-PART SERIAL CALLED "THE CULT OF THE CURSE". IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE WRITERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL WANTED TO SEE IF THEY COULD COME UP WITH ANOTHER SERIAL EQUAL TO "THE MONSTER SOCIETY OF EVIL". THIS WAS A GOOD TRY, BUT IT DIDN'T QUITE COME UP TO THEIR PREVIOUS SUCCESS.

OGGAR WAS A BLOND, CURLY-HAIRED MAN WITH SHARP, POINTED EARS. HE WAS DRESSED IN A GOLD TOGA WHEN HE APPEARED ON A MOUNTAIN THAT WAS OWNED BY AN OLD PROSPECTOR. WHEN HE KICKED THE OLD MAN OFF THE MOUNTAIN, THE PROSPECTOR WENT TO TELL BILLY BATSON, RADIO REPORTER, WHO IN TURN CALLED ON CAPTAIN MARVEL. C.M. AND OGGAR WERE SOON TRADING PUNCHES BUT TO THE SURPRISE OF BOTH MEN, NEITHER COULD HURT THE OTHER

BILLY CONSULTED WITH SHAZAM WHO INFORMED THE YOUNG REPORTER THAT OGGAR WAS AN EVIL GOD THAT HE ONCE TAUGHT WHEN HE WAS 3,000 YEARS YOUNGER IN EGYPT. OGGAR HAD ONE WEAKNESS, BILLY WAS TOLD, BUT IT WAS UP TO BILLY TO FIND IT OUT. CAPTAIN MARVEL AND OGGAR FOUGHT EACH OTHER FURIOUSLY THROUGH FIVE CHAPTERS UNTIL, FINALLY IN CHAPTER SIX IN ISSUE 66, HE FOUND OUT THE SECRET OF OGGAR'S WEAKNESS.

IT TURNED OUT THAT OGGAR'S FAILING WAS A WOMAN. IT WAS REVEALED THAT 3,000 YEARS AGO, HE ABUSED HIS MAGICAL POWERS BY GIVING A WOMAN, WHO HAD REJECTED HIS OFFER OF MARRIAGE, THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY. ACTUALLY, IT WAS A CURSE BECAUSE SHE BECAME OLD AND WITHERED BUT STILL LIVED ON. THE WOMAN HAD SINCE TAKEN UP WITCH-CRAFT AND HAD A FEW MAGICAL POWERS OF HER OWN.

IN CHAPTER SIX, SHE SAW OGGAR AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS, AS HE WAS IN THE PROCESS OF TRYING TO CATCH CAPTAIN MARVEL. SHE QUICKLY TURNED OGGAR INTO A WILD BOAR. THE CAPTAIN THEN CHASED THE WILD BOAR UNTIL THE LUMBERING ANIMAL FELL OVER A CLIFF AND DASHED ITSELF TO BITS ON THE ROCKS AT THE BOTTOM. WITH OGGAR'S DEATH, THE WOMAN WAS ALLOWED TO DIE HERSELF. SHE, NO DOUBT, WAS GRATEFUL BY THAT TIME.

AT THE END OF THE STORY, A PANEL WANTED TO KNOW TWO QUESTIONS OF IT'S READERS NUMBER ONE: DID YOU LIKE THE STORIES ABOUT OGGAR? NUMBER TWO: WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ ANOTHER SERIAL? APPARENTLY THE MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS SAID NO TO BOTH BECAUSE OGGAR NEVER APPEARED AGAIN AND CAPTAIN MARVEL HAD SEEN HIS LAST SERIAL.

THERE WAS A VERY INTERESTING VILLAIN WHO FIRST APPEARED IN C.M.A. #8. HIS REAL NAME WAS STINKY PRINTWHISTLE, JUST A LITTLE, TWO-BIT CRIMINAL UNTIL HE WAS TURNED INTO THE SUPER-POWERFUL IBAC.

THE ORIGIN STORY SHOWED STINKY PRINTWHISTLE CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF TRYING TO BLOW UP A RAILROAD TRESTLE. CAPTAIN MARVEL SHOWED NO MERCY AS HE LET THE LITTLE PUNK FALL TO HIS DEATH BELOW THE TRESTLE. BUT LUCIFER, THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, SAVED PRINTWHISTLE FROM HIS DREADFUL FATE. HE TOLD THE DEVIL HE'D GIVE HIS SOUL TO GET EVEN WITH CAPTAIN MARVEL. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE DEVIL TOOK HIM UP ON THE OFFER AND TURNED THE WEAKLY EXCUSE OF A MAN INTO THE MIGHTY IBAC.

LIKE CAPTAIN MARVEL, IBAC DREW HIS POWERS FROM SPECIAL PERSONS FROM THE PAST. THE "I" CAME FROM IVAN THE TERRIBLE, A RUSSIAN CZAR WHO STOOD FOR TERROR. "B" REPRESENTED BORGIA, A RULER WHOSE CAREER WAS CRIME AND WHOSE LETTER MEANT CUNNING. THE "A" CAME FROM ATTILA THE HUN AND REPRESENTED FIERCENESS. AND FINALLY "C" CAME FROM CALIGULA, A ROME EMPEROR WHO SHOWED NO PITY ON HIS SUBJECTS. THE "C" THEN STOOD FOR CRUELTY.

AS MIGHTY AS IBAC WAS, HIS POWERS COULD NOT MATCH THOSE OF THE CAPTAIN. AND AT THE END OF THE STORY, OUR MAN HIT HIM SUCH A WALLOP THAT HE TURNED HIM BACK INTO STINKY AND MADE THE EVIL SPIRITS IN HIM TAKE OFF AND RUN. DESPITE HIS CRIMES, CAPTAIN MARVEL TOOK PITY ON HIM AND TOLD HIM THAT HE'D LET HIM GO THIS TIME IF HE'D PROMISE NOT TO TURN BAD AGAIN. STINKY MADE THE PROMISE BUT YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF KEEPING HIS WORD.

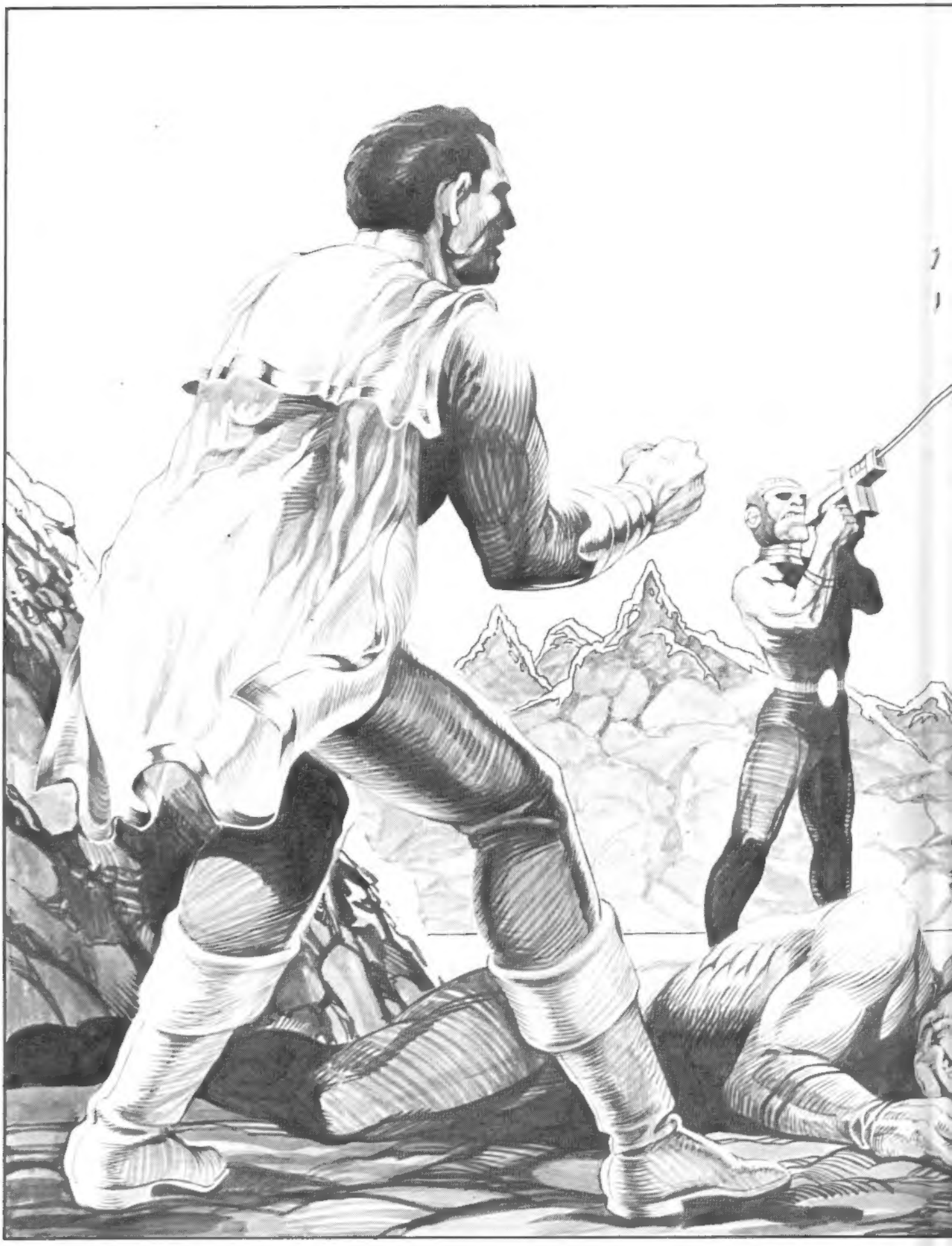
IBAC RETURNED IN THE VERY NEXT ISSUE BUT THIS TIME HE WAS DRESSED ONLY IN BLACK TOREADOR PANTS AND HE WAS SHIRTLESS. HE HAD WORN A GREEN AND BLACK OUTFIT. IN HIS ORIGIN STORY. IBAC RETURNED IN EARLY CHAPTERS OF MR. MIND, BUT AFTER THAT HE WAS NEVER TO MAKE ANOTHER APPEARANCE. FOR THAT I WAS SORRY, BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN AN INTERESTING CHARACTER WITH A LOT OF POSSIBILITIES.

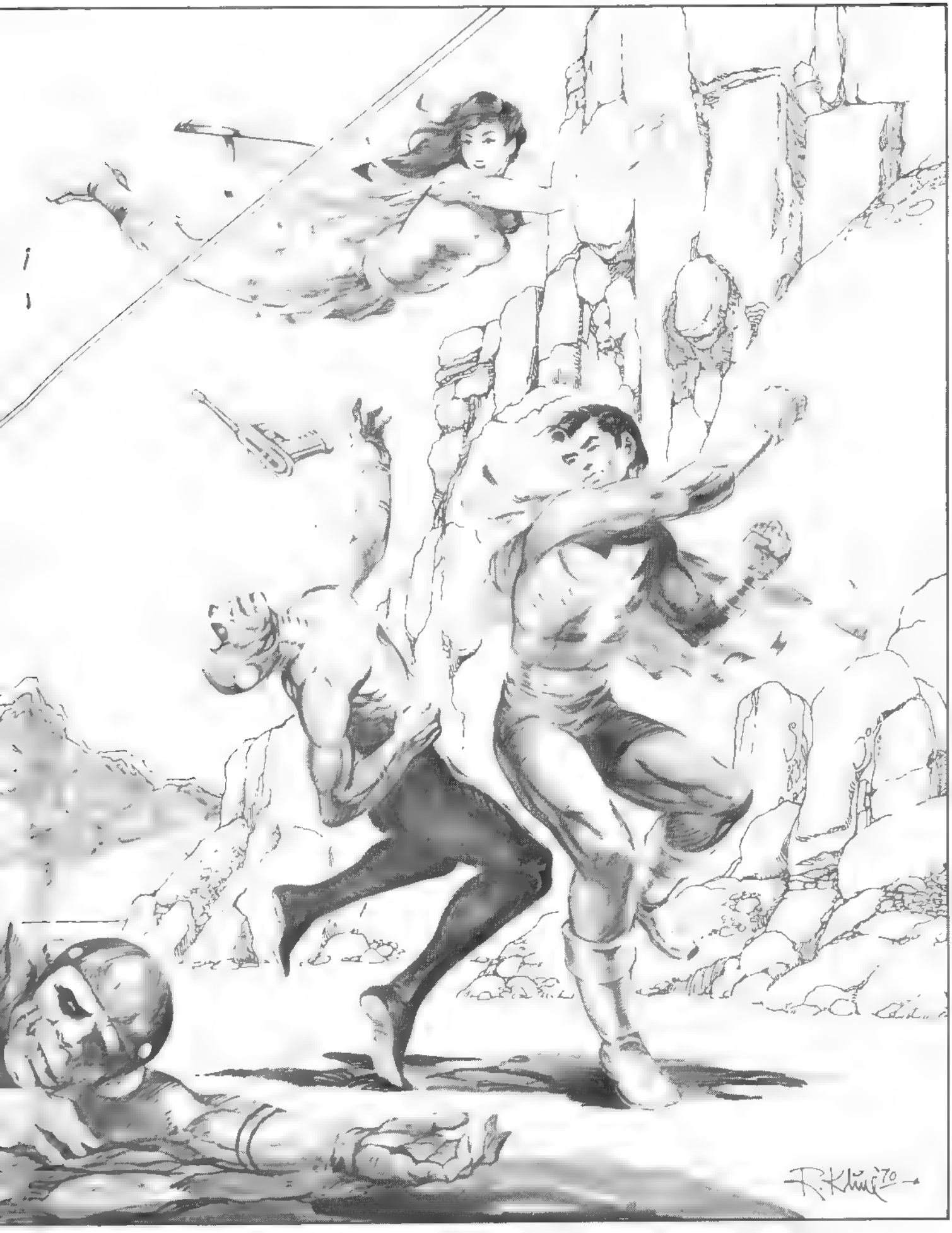
NIPPO THE NIPPONESE WAS A WAR-TIME ENEMY WHO WAS FIRST SHOWN IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #9. DRESSED IN A KIMONA, HE TRIED TO HAMPER THE WAR EFFORT, BUT "CAP" MADE HIM LOOK LIKE A BUFFOON IN ISSUE #14, AND IN THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF "THE SOCIETY OF EVIL".

NIPPO SPOKE IN STEREOTYPE JAPANESE DIALECT. FOR EXAMPLE, AFTER BEING CAUGHT BY CAPTAIN MARVEL IN THE ORIGIN STORY BEFORE HE COULD COMMIT HARI-KARI, HE WAS LED TO THE WHIZ MICROPHONES WHERE HE ADMITTED: "I WAS A FOOL TO TRY! HONORABLE CAPTAIN MARVEL MAKE DISHONORABLE MONKEY OUT OF ME".

A MOST INTERESTING OPPONENT FOUND HIS WAY INTO C.M.A. #78. HE WAS CALLED MR. ATOM. A SCIENTIST INVENTED MR. ATOM(COMPARABLE TO THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER IN SEVERAL WAYS), BUT HE HAD NO IDEA THAT HE WOULD TURN BAD. THE ATOMIC-POWERED ROBOT MADE A DECISION SHORTLY AFTER HIS CREATION. HE STATED: "I WAS NOT DESTINED FOR AN INGLORIOUS SERFDOM! I AM NOT WEAK LIKE ORDINARY MORTALS! I TO RULE OVER MEN...YES, THAT IS MY DESTINY!" A TITANIC BATTLE ENSUED BEFORE OUR MAN AT FAWCETT COULD FINALLY SUBDUE MR. ATOM. AT THE END OF THE STORY THE ROBOT WAS CHAINED IN A THICK-WALLED LEAD PRISON. MR. ATOM WAS ANOTHER EXCELLENT VILLAIN WHO WAS NOT EXPLOITED ENOUGH. HE WAS USED ONLY IN SEVERAL ISSUES AFTER THAT AND WAS DROPPED AFTER CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #90.

LACK OF SPACE DOES NOT PERMIT MENTIONING THE DOZENS OF CHARACTERS WHO FACED "CAP" OVER THE YEARS, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION ONE MORE. THERE WAS A CHUBBY NORTH KOREAN NAMED RED CRUSHER WHO FIRST APPEARED IN C.M.A. #139 IN DECEMBER OF 1952. THE KOREAN WAR WAS WELL UNDERWAY BY THEN AND JUST LIKE IN WORLD TWO, "THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL" WAS HELPING OUT ON THE WAR FRONT. THE RED CRUCHER HAD NO PARTICULAR POWERS BUT HE WAS CONSTANTLY THINKING OF WAYS TO DESTROY





AMERICAN SERVICEMEN SUCH AS HURLING GIANT MINES AT THE G.I.'S. AS ALWAYS, THE CAPTAIN CAME TO THE RESCUE AND THE RED CRUSHER WAS SENT REELING. THE RED CRUSHER WAS USED AS A BATTERING RAM AS "CAP" KNOCKED OTHER NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS TO THE GROUND. CAPTAIN MARVEL LAST EXCLAIMED: "NOW I'M GOING TO WIPE UP THE GROUND WITH YOU MISERABLE COMMIES!"

MR. TAWNY

FAWCETT PUBLICATIONS SEEMED TO TAKE DELIGHT IN A CHARACTER THEY INTRODUCED IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #79 IN DECEMBER OF 1947. HE WAS MR. TAWNY, THE TALKING TIGER. FRANKLY, MR. TAWNY WAS NOT ONE OF MY FAVORITE CHARACTERS. THE PRESENCE OF A TALKING TIGER SEEMED A LITTLE HARD TO BELIEVE AND I ALWAYS PASSED OVER A STORY WHEN MR. TAWNY APPEARED. HOWEVER, THE FOLKS AT FAWCETT OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T AGREE WITH ME. FROM C.M.A. #79, HE WENT ON TO APPEAR IN ISSUES #82, 86, 88, 90, 92, 96, 98, 100,102, 104, 108, 110, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 126, 128, 131, 134, 136, AND 149. THAT'S A TOTAL OF 25 ISSUES OF ONE-SIXTH OF THE NUMBER OF CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES.

IN THE ORIGIN STORY, MR. TAWNY LIVED ON AN ISOLATED ISLAND. A HERMIT LIVED THERE TOO AND ADVISED THE TALKING TIGER THAT HE SHOULD AVOID CIVILIZATION. MR. TAWNY IGNORED THE ADVICE AND HOPPED ABOARD A SHIP AS A STOWAWAY. HE NO SOONER ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY THAN HE RAN INTO CAPTAIN MARVEL AT THE SHIPYARD. THE CAPTAIN, USING A POLICY OF ACT NOW AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER, APPROACHED THE TIGER AND TOLD HIM: "YOU BELONG IN THE ZOO". THEN HE BELTED TAWNY RIGHT IN THE MOUTH. WHEN THIS UNIQUE TIGER AWOKE, HE FOUND HIMSELF BEHIND THE BARS IN THE CITY ZOO. OF COURSE, HE DIDN'T TAKE TO THIS, SO HE BROKE THROUGH THE BARS AND IMMEDIATELY RAN INTO THE CAPTAIN AGAIN.

TAWNY MANAGED TO ELUDE HIS TORMENTOR THIS TIME. HE MADE IT INTO A MEN'S CLOTHING STORE AND SOON BECAME NATTILY ATTIRED IN A GREEN-CHECKERED SPORTS COAT, PANTS, AND HAT. FOR THE THIRD TIME, HE RAN INTO CAPTAIN MARVEL AS HE LEFT THE STORE. THIS TIME, MR. TAWNY MANAGED TO EXPLAIN TO THE CAPTAIN THAT HE IS CIVILIZED AND DIDN'T WANT TO BE PUNCHED IN THE MOUTH AGAIN. CAPTAIN MARVEL SOON RECOVERED FROM HIS SHOCK AND GOT MR. TAWNY A JOB AS A DIRECTOR OF A MUSEUM. AND SO BEGAN THE ADDITION OF A CHARACTER THAT I PERSONALLY DID NOT CARE FOR.

STEAMBOAT

THERE WERE FOUR IMPORTANT SUPPORTING CHARACTERS IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES OVER THE YEARS. I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT SIVANA, MR. MIND, AND MR. TAWNY. ALL OF THESE COULD HAVE LASTED INDEFINITELY. BUT BECAUSE OF CHANGING TIMES, THE FOURTH CHARACTER WAS GIVEN THE AXE. IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #10, STEAMBOAT DEBUTED. STEAMBOAT WAS THE STEREOTYPE NEGRO OF THE DAY. HE WAS TALL AND SLIM, WITH EXAGERATED FACIAL FEATURES, BASICALLY LAZY, COWARDLY, DEEPLY RESPECTFUL OF WHITE FOLKS, AND SPOKE WITH AN ACCENT YOU COULD CUT WITH A KNIFE. STEAMBOAT WAS BILLY BATSON'S VALET. (YOU HAVE TO WONDER HOW BILLY COULD AFFORD A VALET ON A NEWSCASTER'S SALARY. AT LEAST, I HAVE TO WONDER AT THAT.)

A TYPICAL STEAMBOAT SCENE WAS IN C.M.A. #41, WHEN A CROOK TALKED HIS WAY INTO BILLY'S OFFICE AND CONVINCED STEAMBOAT THAT HE SHOULD QUIT HIS OFFICE WORK AND TAKE A NAP. STEAMBOAT HAD LITTLE RESISTANCE AND DID JUST THAT WHILE THE CROOK PLANTED A TIMEBOMB IN BILLY'S DESK. BILLY DISCOVERED THE TIMEBOMB BEFORE IT WENT OFF AND DISASTER WAS AVERTED. HE ALSO FOUND STEAMBOAT SAWING LOGS IN A CHAIR IN OFFICE. THE GOOD-NATURED VALET APOLOGIZED AND TOLD BILLY: "GOLLY, AH'S SORRY AH FELL ASLEEP ON DE JOB, MISTUH BILLY!"

OR TAKE CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #25, BILLY AND STEAMBOAT WERE WALKING THRU A HAUNTED FOREST. THE LOYAL NEGRO SERVANT WAS SHAKING IN HIS TRACKS AND HIS EYES WERE AS BIG AS BALLOONS AS HE EXCLAIMED: "I'SE GOT MAH EYES CLOSED! IT DON'T SCARE ME TO LOOK AT DIS OL' FOREST...IT JES UPSETS MAH NERVOUS SYSTEM."

STILL AND ALL, STEAMBOAT WAS A LOVABLE GUY AND YOU COULDN'T HELP BUT LIKE HIM. IT SEEMED THAT HE GOT BILLY INTO AS MANY SCRAPES AS HE HELPED HIM OUT OF. BUT AFTER ISSUE NUMBER 48 IN AUGUST-SEPTEMBER OF 1945, STEAMBOAT WAS NEVER HEARD FROM AGAIN. THERE WAS NO EXPLANATION OF WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM. HE WAS JUST CONVENIENTLY WRITTEN OUT OF FUTURE SCRIPTS AND THERE WAS NO REFERENCE MADE TO HIM AGAIN. IT WAS AS IF HE HAD NEVER EXISTED.

Dr. Siwana
EVERYBODY'S
FAVORITE "MAD
SCIENTIST"

THE COVERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL

MOST OF THE CAPTAIN MARVEL COVERS WERE A PURE DELIGHT AND HIGHLY SUITABLE FOR FRAMING. THEY HAD STRONG, BOLD ARTWORK THAT SEEMED TO COME ALIVE AND LITERALLY JUMP OUT AT YOU.

WITH THE FIRST THREE ISSUES OF C.M.A., IT WAS APPARENT THEY COULDN'T DECIDE ON A COVER MASTHEAD. THEREFORE THE ARTWORK WAS THE DOMINANT THEME ON THE COVER, WITH CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES IN SMALL BLOCK LETTERS OFF TO THE LEFT. BUT IN C.M.A. #4, THE FAMOUS BLOCK LETTERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL APPEARED AND WAS TO CONTINUE THIS WAY THROUGH ISSUE 139. STARTING WITH #140, AN EXPERIMENTATION OF CAP'S LETTERING WAS TRIED IN SMALLER BLOCKS. THEY SUDDENLY RETURNED WITH THE OLD MASTHEAD IN ISSUE 143, THEN WENT BACK TO MORE EXPERIMENTATION THROUGH ISSUE 150.

I HAD MANY FAVORITE COVERS BUT IF I HAD TO SINGLE OUT TWO, I WOULD SAY ISSUES NUMBER FOUR AND SIX WOULD RANK ONE AND TWO, CONSECUTIVELY. NUMBER FOUR SIMPLY HAD "CAP" FLEXING HIS MUSCLES AND STARING STRAIGHT AT YOU WITH AN HONEST SMILE WHILE A CLOUD OF SMOKE WHIRLED AROUND HIM. THE WORD "SHAZAM" WAS SPELLED OUT IN HUGE BLOCK LETTERS ACROSS THE BILLOWING SMOKE AT HIS LEGS. THE COVER WAS SO BEAUTIFULLY DRAWN, YOU HAVE TO SEE IT TO APPRECIATE IT FULLY. C.M.A. #6 SHOWED CAPTAIN MARVEL WITH OUTSTRETCHED ARMS AS HE TOOK OFF FOR THE SKIES ABOVE. HE WAS SURROUNDED BY THE GODS FROM WHICH HE DERIVED HIS POWERS: SOLOMON, HERCULES, ATLAS ZEUS, ACHILLES AND MERCURY. AGAIN, NOTHING VERY FANCY BUT A GREAT SYMBOLIZATION OF WHAT CAPTAIN MARVEL STOOD FOR. USUALLY THERE WERE ACTION SCENES WITH THE CAPTAIN EITHER SMASHING SOMEONE OR SAVING SOMEONE. ALTHOUGH SIVANA WAS HIS MOST ENDURING FOE OVER THE YEARS, HE ONLY MADE LESS THAN A DOZEN APPEARANCES ON C.M.A. COVERS. AND ALTHOUGH TAWNY DIDN'T MAKE HIS FIRST APPEARANCE UNTIL #79, HE STILL MADE SEVERAL MORE COVERS THAN SIVANA DID.

STARTING WITH ISSUE NUMBER FOUR, "CAP" WAS SHOWN IN A LITTLE ROUND CIRCLE ON THE COVER. THE RING AROUND THE CIRCLE BEGAN TO BRAG IN ISSUE NUMBER 19, "LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY COMIC MAGAZINE". IT MADE THIS CLAIM THROUGH ISSUE 47 IT DROPPED THIS BOAST IN ISSUES 48 AND 49 AND THEN PICKED IT UP AGAIN WITH ISSUE #50. THE FAMILIAR CIRCLE CONTINUED TO BRAG ABOUT THE CIRCULATION IT HAD UNTIL NUMBER 104. THEN "THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL" WAS PUT IN ITS PLACE. THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF 1950 AND FAWCETT COMIC BOOKS WERE STARTING TO FEEL AN ECONOMIC PINCH.

ALL THE COVERS WERE DRAWN WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS OF NUMBERS 17 AND 18. THESE TWO COVERS WERE DONE IN PAINT. COVER #17 SHOWS THE CAPTAIN FLYING THROUGH THE SKIES DEMOLISHING ONE JAPANESE AIR PLANE WHILE ANOTHER WAS TAKING POT SHOTS AT HIM. COVER #18 SHOWS THE MARVEL FAMILY ON STAGE. THESE PAINTED COVERS WERE QUITE UNIQUE AND THEY GAVE CAPTAIN MARVEL, MARY MARVEL AND CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR A DOLL-LIKE APPEARANCE.

CAPTAIN MARVEL NOT ONLY APPEARED IN HIS OWN MAGAZINE, BUT HE ALSO APPEARED I IN FAWCETT'S REPRINT COMICS XMAS, GIFT AND HOLIDAY. HE WAS THE FEATURED STAR OF WHIZ AND AMERICA'S GREATEST COMICS. HE MADE AN APPEARANCE IN MASTER #21 AND WAS SEEN, AMONG OTHERS, ON THE COVERS OF CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT #1 AND FUNNY ANIMALS #1. HE ALSO WAS FEATURED IN THE PART-COMIC, PART WRITTEN STORY CAPTAIN MARVEL STORY-BOOK. HE JOINED CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. AND MARY MARVEL IN MARVEL FAMILY COMICS. HE WAS IN THE ONE-SHOT SPECIAL EDITION AND THE ONE-SHOT CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE GOOD HUMOUR MAN.

MY FAVORITE CAPTAIN MARVEL STORIES

TO TRY AND PICK MY FAVORITE CAPTAIN MARVEL STORIES IS A VERY DIFFICULT TASK, BECAUSE I HAVE SO MANY FAVORITES. HOWEVER, AFTER CAREFUL SCRUTINY, I HAVE COME UP WITH THREE.

THE FIRST APPEARED IN C.M.A. #11 AND WAS CALLED "CAPTAIN MARVEL IN THE FINISH OF MR. FINISH". IT SEEMED THAT THERE WAS THIS CHARACTER NAMED MR. FINISH WHO WAS SIMILAR IN MANNER TO THE DEVIL HIMSELF. THERE WAS A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE NAMED MR. DUCKETT WHO WAS TOLD BY HIS DOCTOR THAT HE HAD ONLY 24 HOURS TO LIVE. BUT MR. FINISH TOLD HIM THAT HE WOULD ALLOW DUCKETT TO LIVE IF HE WOULD BRING HIM FIVE PERSONS WHOSE LIVES WOULD BE ENDED UPON SHAKING HANDS WITH MR. FINISH. DUCKETT BROUGHT HIM THREE VICTIMS AND TRIED TO GET BILLY BATSON TO DO LIKEWISE AND BECOME THE FOURTH VICTIM. BUT BILLY CHANGED TO CAPT. MARVEL AND THEN SHOOK HANDS WITH MR. FINISH. THE HANDSHAKE WAS SO STAGGERING THAT "CAP'S" JET BLACK HAIR TURNED WHITE. IN THE END, MR. FINISH GOT MR. DUCKETT AND WALKED AWAY WITHOUT CAPTAIN MARVEL TOUCHING HIM. THIS WAS ONE OF THE FEW TIMES THAT A CHARACTER WALKED AWAY FROM OUR HERO WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT.

ANOTHER ONE OF MY FAVORITE STORIES APPEARED IN C.M.A. #12, ENTITLED: "CAPTAIN MARVEL JOINS THE ARMY". LIKE ALL COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS DURING WORLD WAR TWO, MANY OF THE STORY THEMES DEALT WITH THE WAR. NO ONE FOUGHT THE ENEMY WITH VERVE OR VIGOR THAN DID THE CAPTAIN. IN THIS ISSUE, BILLY BATSON TRIED TO JOIN THE ARMY BUT WAS TOLD BY THE ARMY RECRUITER: "BETTER GO HOME AND GROW UP A LITTLE. SO HE SAID THE MAGIC WORD "SHAZAM".AND WALKED BACK INTO THE RECRUITERS OFFICE AND TOLD HIM THAT HE IS M.R. VELL. NEEDLESS TO SAY THIS RECRUIT PASSED HIS MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TESTS IN FLYING COLORS. AT CAMP DOWNTON, THE TOUGH SERGEANT ZEROED IN ON M.R. VELL AND ORDERED HIM TO DIG A DITCH. NORMALLY IT WOULD TAKE DAYS TO DIG THE DITCH, BUT M.R. VELL DID IT IN ABOUT A MINUTE. IT TURNED OUT THAT THIS SERGEANT WAS IN CAHOOTS WITH THE ENEMY ALIENS AND HE WAS TRYING TO HURT THE AMERICAN WAR EFFORT. LATER AT AN ENTERTAINMENT SHOW AT THE CAMP, BILLY BATSON INSPIRED THE MEN WITH PATRIOTIC MESSAGES. THE SERGEANT DECIDED THIS WOULD NEVER DO AND HE SNEAKED UP ON BILLY AND KNOCKED HIM OUT. HE TOOK BILLY TO THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS. THEY GAVE INFORMATION THAT WAS TOP SECRET WHEN BILLY PRETENDED THAT HE HAD LOST HIS MEMORY. AFTER GATHERING THE VITAL INFORMATION, M.R. VELL STEPPED BACK INTO ACTION TO WIPE OUT THE RING. HE WAS THEN SUMMONED TO GENERAL HEADQUZRTERS. WHEN HE WALKED IN HE SAW OLD SHAZAM IN A GENERAL'S UNIFORM SEATED AT THE DESK. HIS CREATOR TOLD HIM THAT HIS SERVICES COULD BEST BE UTILIZED OUTSIDE OF THE SERVICE. AS THE OLD SORCEROR PUT IT: "THERE ARE MANY SPLENDID SOLDIERS, BUT ONLY ONE CAPTAIN MARVEL."

NOW I'D LIKE TO TEIL YOU ABOUT THE THIRD STORY THAT I REALLY ENJOYED. IT CAME FROM ISSUE NUMBER 20 . THE NAME OF THE STORY WAS "CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE HORN OF PLENTY". THE STORY BEGAN WHEN A YOUNG MAN COURTING A YOUNG WOMAN DECIDED TO GIVE HER SOMETHING DIFFERENT. HE GAVE HER AN OLD HORN (NOT A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT) THAT HAD LAIN FORGOTTEN IN VARIOUS ATTICS AND STOREROOMS. IT TURNED OUT THAT THIS WAS A HORN OF PLENTY. BY SIMPLY ASKING FOR SOMETHING, THE HORN COMPLIED BY SENDING WHATEVER IS WISHED OUT OF THE HORN. CAPTAIN MARVEL CAME TO THE RESCUE AND KILLED A DRAGON THAT HAD COME FROM THE HORN AFTER THE GIRL WISHED FOR ONE TO TAKE CARE OF HER STUPID BOYFRIEND. BILLY BATSON TOOK THE HORN HOME AND WENT TO SLEEP. STEAMBOAT FOUND IT AND WISHED FOR SOME APPLE PIE. WELL, THE TROUPLE BEGAN WHEN THE HORN OF PLENTY KEPT PRODUCING ONE APPLE PIE AFTER ANOTHER. STEAMPOAT RESPONDED WITH: "LAWZY ME! AH DON'T LIKE APPLE PIE DIS MUCH!". NEVERTHELESS THE PIES CONTINUED TO COME OUT OF THE HORN, TURNING THE ROOM INTO A MOUNTAIN OF PIES. STEAMBOAT FINALLY SAID THE WORD THAT STOPPED THE PIES BUT THE READER WAS NOT MADE AWARE OF IT. THEN SOME CROOKS STOLE THE HORN AND WISHED FOR MONEY WHICH POURED OUT OF THE HORN, FLOODING THE ROOM WITH THE GREEN STUFF. CAPTAIN MARVEL DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO STOP THE MONEY, SO HE WISHED FOR FLOWERS, THEN WISHED FOR CATERPILLARS TO EAT THE FLOWERS, THEN WISHED FOR BIRDS TO EAT THE CATERPILLARS AND THEN FOR WOLVES TO EAT THE BIRDS. WE LATER LEARNED THAT THE SECRET WORD WAS "NOTHING". THE STORY WAS A LITTLE ON THE COMEDY SIDE BUT IT IS WELL DONE AND SHOWS A LOT OF IMAGINATION. THIS STORY SET WELL WITH ME BECAUSE IT WAS ONE OF THE STORIES THAT I CAN VIVIDLY RECALL FROM THE FORTIES.

MISCELANEOUS COMMENTS

IN THE EARLY STORIES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, THE BUILDING IN WHICH RADIO STATION WHIZ WAS LOCATED HAD A HUGE ABC ON TOP OF THE BUILDING. BUT IN LATER ISSUES, THIS WAS CHANGED TO WHIZ; PERHAPS FAWCETT WAS RECEIVING SOME FLAK FROM THE ABC RADIO NETWORK ABOUT THE SIMILARITY.....?

TELEVISION BEGAN TO INFLUENCE THE LIFE OF BILLY BATSON IN THE LATE FORTIES. UNTIL THEN HE WAS SIMPLY A RADIO REPORTER. BUT WITH THE ADVENT OF TELEVISION, BILLY STARTED DOING NEWSCASTS IN 1950 IN C.M.A. #107. HE ALTERNATED FROM RADIO TO TELEVISON FROM THEN ON. RADIO WAS ON THE ROPES DURING THIS TIME PERIOD BECAUSE OF TELEVISION, BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE WRITERS DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER TO WRITE OFF RADIO AS FAR AS BILLY BATSON'S CAREER WAS CONCERNED.....

ONE OF THE GIMMICKS DESIGNED TO INCREASE SALES AND WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE WAS THE FEATURING OF VARIOUS CITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY. IT STARTED IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES NUMPER 24 WHEN BILLY BATSON VISITED MINNEAPOLIS. THE FOLLOWING ISSUE HE PAYED A VISIT TO DETROIT. ISSUE 26 FOUND HIM IN SEATTLE. LOS ANGELES WAS THE CITY IN #27 WHILE SAN FRANCISCO FOLLOWED THE NEXT MONTH. PORTLAND GOT THE TREATMENT IN #29, TO BE FOLLOWED IN CONSECUTIVE ISSUES WITH DENVER, BUFFALO DALLAS, OMAHA, OKLAHOMA CITY, INDIANAPOLIS, ST. LOUIS, CINCINNATI, CHATTANOOGA, PITTSBURGH, BOSTON, DAYTON, ST. PAUL, CHICAGO AND WASHINGTON D.C. IT STARTED IN AGAIN IN #54 WITH KANSAS CITY, FOLLOWED IN CONSECUTIVE ISSUES WITH COLUMBUS, MOBILE, AND ROCHESTER. ISSUE NUMBER 67 FEATURED HARTFORD AND FORT WORTH WAS THE LAST CITY TO BE HONORED BY BILLY BATSON'S PRESENCE IN NUMBER 69. USUALLY IN THESE

STORIES, BILLY WOULD BE INTRODUCED TO THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN, THE LOCAL MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTOR, SOME LEADING NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS AND LOCAL BROADCASTERS.

THE IDEA WAS THAT A PLUG IN A NATIONALLY-DISTRIBUTED COMIC BOOK COULD CREATE A RUN ON CAPTAIN MARVEL COMICS IN THOSE CITIES, WHILE LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR FUTURE SALES BECAUSE OF THE CLOSENESS THAT A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY HAD FELT TO CAPTAIN MARVEL FOR HELPING PUBLICIZE THEIR CITY. THE PLUG FOR THE MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTOR COULDN'T HURT THE CIRCULATION OF CAPTAIN MARVEL COMICS ONE BIT AND THE STRATEGIC PLACING OF CAPTAIN MARVEL COMICS ON THE NEWSTANDS ALSO HELPED. SO, YOU CAN SEE THE FOLKS AT FAWCETT WERE REALLY ON THE BALL WHEN IT CAME TO MERCHANDISING THEIR PRODUCT.....

IN C.M.A. #35 A NEW CHARACTER IS INTRODUCED NAMED RADAR. RADAR WILL BECOME TH THE NUMBER TWO FEATURE BEHIND CAPTAIN MARVEL JUNIOR IN MASTER COMICS..... CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES NUMBER 122 WAS UNIQUE IN THAT IT ONLY FEATURED TWO CAPT. MARVEL STORIES, THE ONLY ISSUE EVER TO DO THAT.....C.M.A. #1 HAD 68 PAGES. THIS CONTINUED UNTIL NUMBER 30 WHEN IT DROPPED TO 60 PAGES. TO MAKE THIS LESS NOTICEABLE TO THE READER, THE NUMBERING OF PAGES WAS DISCONTINUED WITH THIS ISSUE. IN ISSUE NUMBER 36, THE NUMBER OF PAGES DROPPED TO 52. THIS PAGE POLICY MOVED ALONG UNTIL #44 WHEN THE NUMBER OF PAGES WERE CUT AGAIN, THIS TIME TO 36.

AFTER THE WAR ENDED, THE PRESSURE FOR PAPER ENDED AND ISSUE NUMBER 53 PROUDLY PROCLAIMED THAT BEGINNING NEXT MONTH CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES WOULD BE EXPANDED TO 64 PAGES. BUT AS IT TURNED OUT, THEY OUTDID THEMSELVES. ISSUE NUMBER 54 IN FEBRUARY OF 1946 HAD 68 PAGES, JUST LIKE OLD TIMES. THEY EVEN WENT BACK TO NUMBERING THE PAGES. AS IT TURNED OUT, THIS WAS THE QUICKEST REVERSAL OF POLICY YOU EVER SAW, FOR WHEN ISSUE 55 CAME OUT THEY DROPPED FROM 68 TO 52 PAGES AND AGAIN DROPPED THE NUMBERING OF PAGES. FROM THEN ON, UNTIL THE DEMISE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES, THE COMIC BOOKS WOULD NEVER CLIMB ABOVE 52 PAGES AGAIN. IN FACT, MOST OF THE COMIC BOOKS REMAINING WERE TO BE TRIMMED TO 36 PAGES.....

THERE WAS A STORY IN #65 THAT DEALT WITH CAPTAIN MARVEL AND MECHANIX ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. FAWCETT PUBLISHED THIS MAGAZINE AND THIS AGAIN WAS THE TECHNIQUE OF USING CAPTAIN MARVEL TO PLUG SOMETHING THAT WOULD HAVE A DESIROUS FINANCIAL RESULT....

CAPTAIN KID SHOULD BE MENTIONED SOMEWHERE IN HERE. THIS LITTLE RED-HEADED YOUNGSTER, WHO WANTED TO BE A SUPER-HERO HIMSELF, WAS FEATURED IN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES MORE THAN ANY OTHER OUTSIDE CHARACTER. HE BEGAN IN C.M.A. #5. HE MADE EVERY ISSUE BUT NUMBERS 28, 32 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 47, AND 49. CAPTAIN KID WAS SORT OF LIKE SUPERSNIPE. A WELL-MEANING KID DRESSED IN A GREEN SUIT WITH CAPE. HE LATER ABANDONED THIS OUTFIT FOR NORMAL CLOTHING IN LATER ISSUES. CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES WAS PUBLISHED EVERY FOUR WEEKS AT THE INCEPTION. THIS CHANGED TO EVERY THIRD FRIDAY WITH THE 19TH ISSUE. WITH #23, IT WENT BACK TO A PUBLICATION DATE OF EVERY FOUR WEEKS, THEN MONTHLY WITH #25. WITH #48, FAWCETT STARTED PUBLISHING EVERY OTHER MONTH. IT WAS BACK TO EVERY MONTH WITH NUMBER 50. NUMBER 52 KICKED OFF A POLICY OF A CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES EVERY OTHER FRIDAY. THIS LASTED UNTIL #63 WHEN IT WAS BACK TO EVERY MONTH AND THIS WAS THE WAY IT WAS TO REMAIN....

ARTISTS AND WRITERS OF CAPTAIN MARVEL

THE ARTISTS AND WRITERS ON "CAP" WERE MANY. THE ORIGIN OF CAPTAIN MARVEL IN WHIZ #1 WAS WRITTEN BY BILL PARKER. THERE IS SOME DOUBT AS TO JUST WHO WAS THE FIRST TO DRAW "THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL" ALTHOUGH IT IS KNOWN THAT JACK KIRBY AND GEORGE TUSKA WERE AMONG THE EARLY ARTISTS ON THE STRIP. THERE IS SOME CONTROVERSY TOO ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT JACK KIRBY DREW CAPTAIN MARVEL NUMBER ONE. HOWEVER, RICK DURELL OF EL SEGUNDO, CALIFORNIA, SAYS THERE IS NO CONTROVERSY ON THAT SCORE AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED. SAYS RICK: "THE FIRST ISSUE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES IS ALL JACK KIRBY ART, AND THIS I GOT FROM KIRBY HIMSELF, IN CASE ANYONE WANTS TO ARGUE THE POINT." JERRY BAILS OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN, WHO HELPED SUPPLY SOME OF THE INFORMATION ON ARTISTS AND WRITERS, SAYS "KIRBY DID DO SOME OF C.M.A. #1 AS DID GEORGE TUSKA, WHO DREW MANY EARLY EPISODES BEFORE C. BECK TOOK OVER." RAYMOND MILLER OF CREEKSIDE, PENNSYLVANIA OFFERED HIS THOUGHTS ON THE DISPUTE BY STATING: "THE DEBATE AS TO-DID KIRBY OR DIDN'T KIRBY WORK ON C.M.A. #1 HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR YEARS. MYSELF, I SAY NO." I TRIED TO REACH JACK KIRBY BY LETTER BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS, SO THE DEBATE WILL HAVE TO STAND WHERE IT IS.

EDITORIAL NOTE: WHEN LARRY BIGMAN AND I(ANDY WARNER) WERE AT C.C. BECK'S HOUSE, BECK VERIFIED THAT THE ARTWORK IN WHIZ #1 WAS HIS OWN. BECK WAS THE ARTIST FAWCETT WENT TO WHEN THEY WANTED TO PUT OUT A COMIC BOOK SUPER-HERO ON THE LEVEL OF SUPERMAN. BECK HAD BEEN WORKING FOR FAWCETT AT THE TIME.

mr. MIND
YIPEES... CAPTAIN MARVEL!
NEWTON

THE CHIEF ARTIST WAS CHARLES C. BECK. BECK WAS CREDITED WITH MOST OF THE ARTWORK OVER THE YEARS BUT THERE WERE OTHERS WHO DREW IT FROM TIME TO TIME. THEY WERE JACK BINDER, RAY HARTFORD, DAVID BERG, MARC SWAYZE, EDDIE ROBBINS, KURT SCHAFFENBERGER, PETE COSTANZA, CHIC STONE, HARRY CHESTER STUDIO, CHARLES SULTAN, RED MOLLEH AND AL FAGALY.

JUST AS C.C. BECK WAS THE CHIEF ARTIST, YOU MIGHT SAY THAT OTTO BINDER WAS THE CHIEF WRITER. HIS IMAGINATIVE SCRIPT-WRITING BEGAN IN APRIL OF 1942 WITH C.M.A. #9 AND CONTINUED THROUGH 1953. IN ADDITION TO "CAP", HE ALSO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANY OF THE MARY MARVEL AND MARVEL FAMILY COMICS, AND, IN FACT, WROTE THE ORIGINAL SCRIPTS FOR THEM.

I MENTIONED BILL PARKER EARLIER. BESIDES HIM AND BINDER, OTHER WRITERS WERE GEORGE PAL, JOE MILLARD, WILLIAM WOOLFOLK, MANLEY WADE WELLMAN, FRANCE (ED) HERRON AND ROBERT KANIGHER. MY APOLOGIES TO ANY ARTISTS AND WRITERS WHO WORKED ON "CAP" THAT I FAILED TO PROPERLY CREDIT.(EDITORIAL NOTE: CHARLES BECK WAS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR MUCH OF THE HUMOR THAT WAS INTERJECTED INTO THE CAPTAIN'S COMICS THAT HE WORKED ON. OTTO BINDER WROTE, FOR THE MOST PART, STRAIGHT SCIENCE FICTION OR FANTASY ORIENTED SCRIPTS CONTAINING SCENES EXEMPLIFYING HIS OWN HUMOR.)

THE DEMISE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, SHORTLY AFTER CAPTAIN MARVEL MADE HIS DEBUT, HE WAS FACED WITH A COURT SUIT FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF D.C. COMICS. THEY FELT THAT "THE BIG RED CHEESE" WAS TOO SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE TO THEIR NUMBER ONE ATTRACTION, SUPERMAN.

(EDITORIAL NOTE: THE TRUTH WAS THAT D.C. WAS GETTING PERTURBED THAT CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS SELLING TWO MILLION COPIES, MORE THAN ANY OTHER COMIC IN HISTORY. MR. BECK INFORMED ME THAT FAWCETT HAD INTENDED TO CREATE A HERO ON THE SAME IDEA AS SUPERMAN, BUT NOT TO COPY SUPERMAN IMPLICITLY.)

A LEGAL BATTLE ENSUED OVER THE CHARGE OF PLAGIARISM UNTIL 1953. BY THIS TIME, FAWCETT HAD BEEN SLOWLY BUT SURELY DROPPING MORE OF ITS' TITLES. IT SEEMED TO FAWCETT, THAT AS FAR AS THEY WERE CONCERNED, SUPER-HEROES IN PARTICULAR AND COMIC BOOKS IN GENERAL WERE SIMPLY NOT SELLING. THEY DECIDED THAT TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT A COSTLY LEGAL BATTLE WHILE PUBLISHING COMIC BOOKS THAT WEREN'T SELLING WAS A LOSING PROPOSITION. SO, THEY GOT D.C. OFF THEIR NECKS BY AGREEING TO STEP ASIDE AND LET THEIR COMIC LINE GO INTO OBLIVION.

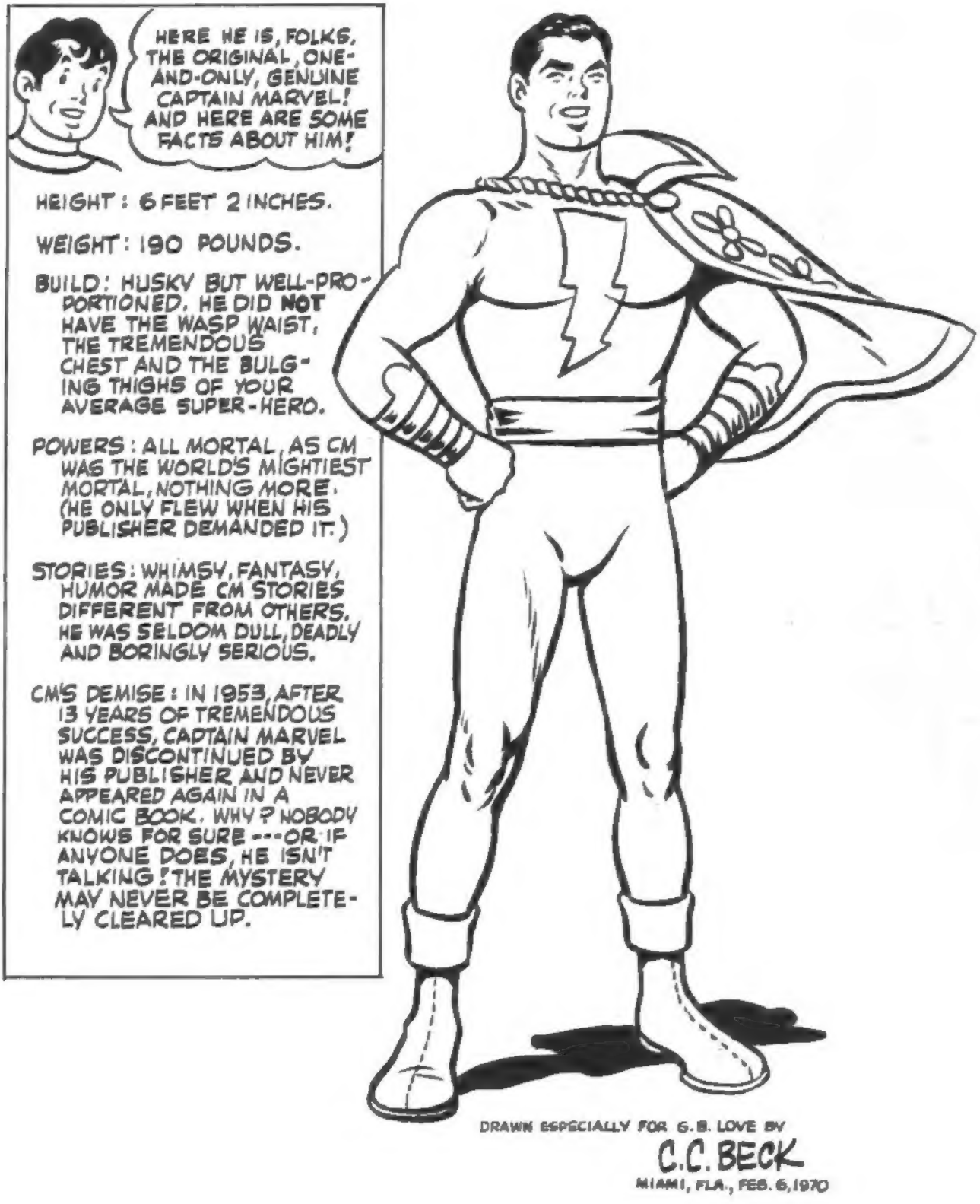
AND SO IT WAS THAT NOVEMBER OF 1953 WAS A VERY SAD DATE. THAT'S WHEN CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #150 CAME OUT. IT WAS TO BE THE LAST APPEARANCE EVER FOR "CAP". ODDLY ENOUGH, THE COVER STORY PROCLAIMED: "YOU ARE INVITED TO CAPTAIN MARVEL'S WEDDING". IT SHOULD HAVE STATED: "YOU ARE INVITED TO CAPTAIN MARVEL'S FUNERAL". HOWEVER TO SOME MARRIED MEN THE TWO ARE INTERCHANGEABLE, SO MAYBE IT DIDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE. BY THE WAY, FOR ANY WORRIED HISTORIANS, CAPTAIN MARVEL DID NOT GET MARRIED IN THIS FINAL ISSUE.

I HAVE ONE COMMENT TO MAKE CONCERNING D.C.'S CHARGE THAT CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS A TAKEOFF ON SUPERMAN. SUPERMAN HIT THE AMERICAN SCENE IN 1938 LIKE A BLOCKBUSTER. IT WAS ONLY INEVITABLE THAT HIS POPULARITY WOULD BRING ON OTHER SUPER-HEROES, JUST LIKE ON TELEVISION. IF THERE IS A POPULAR COMEDY SHOW, THEN THE NETWORKS WILL FOLLOW WITH OTHER COMEDY SHOWS SIMILAR IN CONTENT. THE SAME WITH DETECTIVE SHOWS, QUIZ SHOWS, ETC.

IF CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS A DIRECT STEAL ON SUPERMAN, THEN SO WERE A HUNDRED AND ONE OTHER SUPER-HEROES WHO BEGAN TO FLOOD THE COMIC BOOK MARKET. IN MY OPINION, THERE WERE SO MANY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CAPTAIN MARVEL AND SUPERMAN THAT THERE COULD HAVE BEEN NO COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TWO

AND AS FAR AS STEALING STORIES FROM SUPERMAN, YOU CAN'T PUBLISH AS MANY STORIES AS BOTH COMPANIES DID WITHOUT SOME IDEAS SHOWING UP IN EACH OTHERS' COMIC BOOKS. IN FACT, THERE IS A GOOD PROBABILITY THAT SOME STORY LINES FROM CAPTAIN MARVEL MAY HAVE FOUND THEIR WAY INTO SOME SUPERMAN STORIES. OTTO BINDER STATES CATEGORICALLY IN ALTER EGO #7: "NOT ONE STORY IDEA WAS EVER LIFTED FROM SUPERMAN!"

THE ROCKET'S BLAST SPECIAL #8 is published by The S.F.C.A., 9875 SW 212 St., Miami, Fla. 33157. Price $1.25 Editor & Publisher = G.B. Love. Editing and layout by Andy Warner. Nothing contained herein may be reprinted. Capt. Marvel is copyrighted by Fawcett Pub. Co.


HERE HE IS, FOLKS, THE ORIGINAL, ONE-AND-ONLY, GENUINE CAPTAIN MARVEL! AND HERE ARE SOME FACTS ABOUT HIM!
HEIGHT: 6 FEET 2 INCHES.
WEIGHT: 190 POUNDS.
BUILD: HUSKY BUT WELL-PROPORTIONED. HE DID NOT HAVE THE WASP WAIST, THE TREMENDOUS CHEST AND THE BULGING THIGHS OF YOUR AVERAGE SUPER-HERO.
POWERS: ALL MORTAL. AS CM WAS THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL, NOTHING MORE. (HE ONLY FLEW WHEN HIS PUBLISHER DEMANDED IT.)
STORIES: WHIMSY, FANTASY, HUMOR MADE CM STORIES DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS. HE WAS SELDOM DULL, DEADLY AND BORINGLY SERIOUS.
CM'S DEMISE: IN 1953, AFTER 13 YEARS OF TREMENDOUS SUCCESS, CAPTAIN MARVEL WAS DISCONTINUED BY HIS PUBLISHER AND NEVER APPEARED AGAIN IN A COMIC BOOK. WHY? NOBODY KNOWS FOR SURE ---OR IF ANYONE DOES, HE ISN'T TALKING! THE MYSTERY MAY NEVER BE COMPLETELY CLEARED UP.

DRAWN ESPECIALLY FOR G.B. LOVE BY

C.C. BECK

MIAMI, FLA., FEB. 6, 1970

NEWTON